

THE WOODFIN WAY

A CITIZEN-LED TRANSITION FOR PROGRESS IN BIRMINGHAM



*A Transition Report featuring public input and recommendations
for progress in Birmingham*

Presented By
The Randall L. Woodfin Transition Team

Published on March 15, 2018

MISSION

Building Community Through Servant Leadership

THEME

Putting People First

VALUES

Customer Service
Efficiency
Effectiveness
Transparency
Accountability



PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

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*****Please visit www.birminghamal.gov/woodfinway to download our full Digital Appendix.***

LETTER FROM MAYOR WOODFIN



Dear Neighbors, Partners, and Citizens of Birmingham,

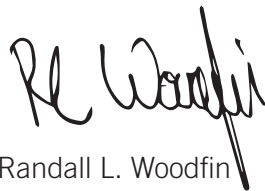
It is my pleasure to present the City of Birmingham's 2018 Mayoral Transition Report titled, "The Woodfin Way." During the campaign, I pledged to 'Put People First.' I believe now more than ever that for Birmingham to reach its full potential, every citizen must trust that their elected officials have their best interests at heart.

As the first step on this journey, we have assembled an inclusive, experienced, and well-qualified transition team to evaluate our city's readiness to put people first and to submit recommendations for improvements.

I am optimistic about the future of our great city. We must embrace an "all hands on deck" approach if we want to tackle the challenges that plague our city. This report will help us write the next chapter of Birmingham's history with the citizens, families, and small businesses that helped shape my campaign.

The people made it clear that they expect progress for all 99 neighborhoods to be driven by the Mayor's Office. I aim to deliver that leadership for you.

Birmingham, let's get to work!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R. Woodfin". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping 'R' and a long, thin vertical stroke extending from the bottom of the 'n'.

Randall L. Woodfin
Mayor, City of Birmingham

LETTER FROM TRANSITION TEAM CO-CHAIRS



Mayor Woodfin,

We are pleased to submit this report, on behalf of the members of your transition team. We have reviewed the city's current operations, procedures, and functions; and consulted citizens, city employees, community leaders, and stakeholders. With the knowledge obtained, we are honored to present to you our ultimate counsel and recommendations as Mayor.

We would like to acknowledge and thank the many contributors who assisted in this endeavor. We commend them for their cooperation and timeliness throughout this vigorous process. Without their support, commitment, and collaboration, this report would not have been complete. Their experience, knowledge, and diversity will be an asset to you as you lead this great city. It is our hope that this collective effort provides guidance to you, the city council, city employees, and the stakeholders in the City of Birmingham.



We realize this report should serve as a catalyst for continued discussion as this is only the starting point and will require modification, adjustment, and further analysis. However, we are confident that we have provided a roadmap, that you can use, to address your top priorities. Be assured that all members of this committee are here to assist you in any capacity you believe will help us all build a better Birmingham.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you and all the citizens of Birmingham.

Yours in service to the city,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles C. Krulak".

General Charles Krulak
Co-Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bobbie Knight".

Bobbie Knight
Co-Chair

TRANSITION TEAM LEADERSHIP



Tracey Morant Adams
Entrepreneurship &
Economic Development



Josh Carpenter
Entrepreneurship &
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Annie Allen
Transparent &
Efficient Government



Daniel Coleman
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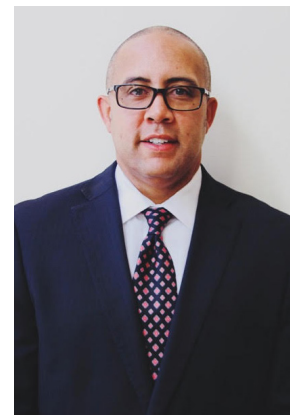
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Transition Coordinator

The Woodfin Transition & Inaugural Foundation Board:

Chairman, General Charles Krulak
Secretary, Bobbie Knight
Treasurer, Jonathan Porter
Senior Advisor, Rick Heartsill
Ethics Advisor, Steve Shaw

* Transition Team Staff and Subcommittee Chairs listed in acknowledgements section of this document

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



We deserve better.

I spent a year and a half listening to Birmingham residents' hopes, wishes, and dreams for our city. During that time, I learned a lot about what was important to them. In fact, my campaign platform, "The Woodfin Plan," articulated my own vision for the city as well as the opportunities envisioned by many of the people I encountered.

The past few months have been an incredible period of discovery, revealing significant opportunities and needs for the City of Birmingham. I asked a transition team of twelve amazing leaders to seek input from the public, to research best practices, and to submit recommendations that can provide strategic guidance for my administration over the next four years.

This report represents what progress can look like for Birmingham related to issues that matter most, including: 1) Neighborhood Revitalization & Public Safety, 2) Education & Workforce Development, 3) Entrepreneurship & Economic Development, 4) Transparent & Efficient Government, and 5) Social Justice.

This report, compiled by an incredible team of volunteer leaders and their support staff on behalf of hundreds of citizens who provided input, is filled with recommendations, proposals, and ideas. Many of the suggestions from the transition team are dynamic, falling outside of the neat lines of their topical areas. They represent intersections of progress for the City of Birmingham.

As you read the full report, you will notice four major themes that cut across each topical area: 1) People, 2) Communication, 3) Infrastructure, and 4) Collaboration.

We need to invest in the recruitment, retention, and development of people:

"Putting People First" is not just a slogan, it needs to be our strategy.

The City of Birmingham has approximately 4,400 employees in 28 different departments and divisions. The transition review process has revealed an imbalance in our staff structure. Some areas are understaffed or overstaffed. Other areas have inefficient management structures that make effective management of employees and the delivery of good customer service challenging for the city.

Beyond that, the city has difficulties with recruiting the talent it needs to protect our citizens and our infrastructure. Talent recruitment and retention must be an area of focus for the city to effectively compete against other cities. We will need to be creative and consider changes to age-old policies that impede our ability to recruit and retain people and companies.

The theme of "Putting People First" goes beyond city employees. It must extend to citizens who want to feel more engaged with opportunities to serve the city as volunteers on city-related boards and agencies.

The City of Birmingham needs more dynamic communications in and around City Hall:

Navigating Birmingham can be a challenge for even the most experienced resident or business person. This is true whether it is accessing city services such as requests to fix potholes or secure business licenses.

Effective communication ranges from the quality of customer service at service points to the city's website and response rates on phone calls and e-mails to City Hall.

Beyond that, public input across all five of our transition teams illustrates a significant desire for interagency communications and for the city to serve more of a convener role, ensuring key partners are in alignment with a total vision that clarifies roles, enhances communications, and leverages the best of who we are as a city.

We need a robust plan to address aging infrastructure, inefficient systems, and long-term liabilities:

Birmingham is in the midst of an intergenerational transfer of leadership in its institutions, including city government. Thus, the decisions we are making today will impact the people and structures that have brought us to the point we are today. At the same time, the city will need to be more intentional about investing in our young people if we want to keep them here, productive and whole.

Our transition process has revealed that the city has above-average costs and maintenance fees for the number of employees and citizens we have. In fact, Birmingham has so much aging infrastructure that the cost of maintenance is taking the cash we need to invest in the people and programs that our citizens and other stakeholders want. Some of our aging infrastructure is due to the legacy of segregation, which required duplicate parks, stations, and other resources provided by the City of Birmingham.

At the same time, we have a underfunded pension and other deferred employee legacy costs.

City departments and key stakeholders want to break through the silos and solve problems together:

Every committee shared the same level of excitement and frustration about the need to have key organizations – inside and outside the city - coordinate efforts to solve problems in

their areas of service. Organizations are hungry for a clear vision and strategy that will allow them to fulfill their missions with confidence and add distinctive value to the people they serve. We need more public-private partnerships in the City of Birmingham.

Conclusion

While this report represents the best thinking of some of Birmingham's brightest minds, please know that it represents the very first of our planning efforts for the City of Birmingham.

We expect many of these recommendations to be implemented within my first term, especially for those recommendations that leverage the incredible power of the diversity within our city.

I encourage you to read the full report, including my brief "Look Ahead," which outlines initiatives that will impact the remainder of the current fiscal year. In addition, be sure to review the Digital Appendix document featured on the city's website, birminghamal.gov, to see the full depth and range of thought put forth by each of our citizen-led transition teams.

I am honored to be your Mayor and to help deliver a better Birmingham for you. You deserve it.

Thank you,
Mayor Randall L. Woodfin

MAJOR MILESTONES: THE FIRST 100 DAYS

- **Launched Citizen-Led Transition Process**
- **Launched Executive Search for Six City Department Heads**
- **Held Weekly Mayor Staff Meetings & Department Head Meetings**
- **Served 8,000+ citizens more than 11,000 meals in Warming Stations**
- **Launched Customer and Employee-Centric Initiatives**
- **Reinstituted Employee COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) and Longevity Pay**
- **Secured Unanimous Vote on BJCC Renovation and Expansion Project**
- **Instituted Ticket Distribution Fair Practices**
- **Launched New City Website**
- **Hosted Public Works Employee Engagement**
- **Addressed Major Facilities Issues (elevators, heating, air)**
- **Launched Operation Step Up**
- **Hosted Inaugural State of the Community Event**
- **Birmingham named a "Smart City" by the International Smart Cities Council**
- **Birmingham named a "Rise of the Rest City" by the Revolution Fund**

NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION & PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE REPORT

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The Neighborhood Revitalization and Public Safety committee focused on the methods and means necessary to support safe, stable, vibrant, and thriving neighborhoods within the City of Birmingham. We focused on those areas of the city that have become blighted and distressed over the past 40 years.

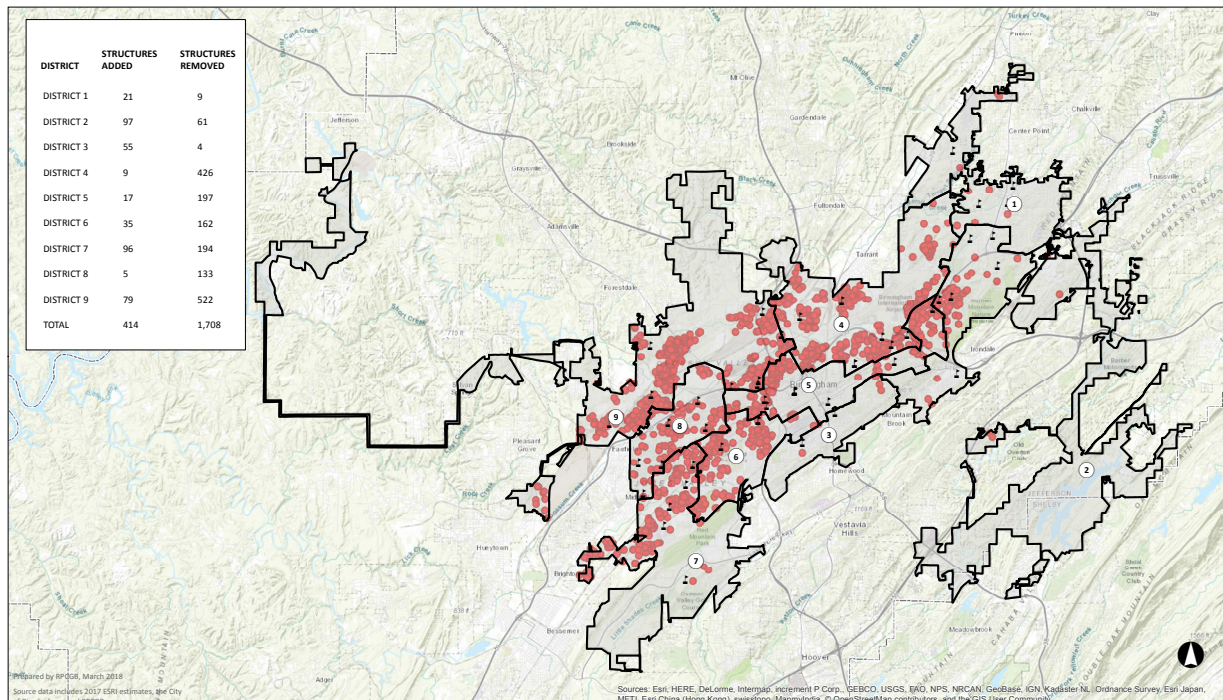
This slow disintegration in the fabric of Birmingham neighborhoods owes itself to a migratory pattern of people out of the city limits in search of better educational options for their children, better investment options from a home ownership perspective, better food and entertainment amenities, and the perception of an overall better quality of life.

Over the years, the aforementioned disintegration manifested itself in the form of neighborhood instability, including increased crime and perception of crime, proliferation of vacant and abandoned houses, lack of investment and reinvestment, lack of public intervention, socioeconomic segregation and distress, inadequate estate and property succession planning, among other issues. One glaring result of these conditions is an imbalance between the demolition of blighted and abandoned houses, and the lack of production of new housing stock (as seen in the map below).

The intent of the Neighborhood Revitalization and Public Safety Committee report is to provide suggested methods to reverse neighborhood decline, and support the Neighborhood Revitalization and Public Safety components of the Woodfin Plan entitled “Revitalizing Our 99 Neighborhoods, and Making Them Safe and Secure.”

Birmingham has an opportunity to position itself as a more progressive city by partnering with public, private, and philanthropic sector actors to engage neighborhood residents through inter-generational coalitions that will work together to reclaim and revitalize communities and neighborhoods.

BIRMINGHAM CITY DEMOLITIONS BY COUNCIL DISTRICT, 2010 - 2015



PROCESS & METHODOLOGY

The team began its evaluation process by interviewing department heads responsible for city operating divisions that have an impact on community development and public safety. Interviews were conducted with the following departments: Municipal Courts, Police, Fire and Rescue, Planning, Engineering, and Permits, Traffic Engineering, Public Works, Crossplex, the Housing Authority of the Birmingham District, Parks and Recreation, Equipment Management, and Community Development. Each department responded to the Transition Readiness Questionnaire and provided additional information during interview sessions.

Following the Department Head Interviews in mid-November, our co-chairs engaged all individuals who volunteered to participate on the Neighborhood Revitalization and Public Safety committee. More than 70 community volunteers convened at the BJCC Forum Building for the first committee meeting. The committee and sub-committees met six times over the course of three months. The initial meeting of the group allowed committee members to express their thoughts, comments, and concerns about the current state of neighborhoods and public safety within the City of Birmingham. A series of themes emerged around which we created sub-committees led by “Solution Team Leaders.” The sub-committee themes included:

1. **Housing Production**
2. **Where is the Money?**
3. **Culture**
4. **Public Safety**
5. **Covenants + Capacity Building + Partnerships**
6. **Youth and Recreation**
7. **Healthy Competitive Neighborhoods**
8. **No More Plans!**

Team Leaders were directed to drive the work of their sub-committees toward “solutions” and to use a theme evaluation rubric as the method to direct their work. We surmised that an effective revitalization plan “begins” with neighborhood stabilization (public safety led), and “ends” with implementation of neighborhood revitalization plans.

PUBLIC INPUT

The committee’s consensus was that the Woodfin Administration could best live up to its promises to **secure neighborhoods** by first implementing a series of stabilization initiatives, starting with a robust and well planned public safety strategy. Public safety is the foundational element necessary to re-create neighborhoods of choice. Other mission critical initiatives that must be implemented in parallel involve accountability and transparency of dollars currently allocated and spent on community development programs, a process to slow the demolition of homes throughout the city and reallocate funds to an achievable housing production plan, and addressing the cultural opportunities found throughout the city.

Stabilization – Step 1

Public Safety

Where’s the Money?

Housing Production

Culture

After the stabilization process, the committee’s consensus was that the Woodfin Administration could best live up to its promises to **revitalize neighborhoods** by implementing a series of revitalization initiatives. These initiatives start with a strategy to review all existing neighborhood redevelopment plans with the intent of creating Healthy Competitive Neighborhoods based upon policies and newly established covenants that preserve and enhance home values, as well as a robust focus on family stability and engaging city-wide youth development programs.



Revitalization – Step 2

No More Plans!

Healthy Competitive Neighborhoods

Covenants + Capacity Building + Partnerships

Youth and Recreation

METRICS

HEALTHY COMPETITIVE NEIGHBORHOODS = “A place where it makes economic sense for people to invest their time, energy, and money!”

A robust set of standard metrics must be developed for the City of Birmingham’s community development initiatives to answer the question: “Are we there yet?” Relevant metrics must be established to measure what the community cares about and track whether the community is moving in the right direction. The graphic on page 11 provides information about the number of new structures added compared to the number of blighted structures removed (by city council district). This information can be used to establish new housing production goals (by council district), and to measure outcomes derived by new community development initiatives.

Well-developed performance measurement approaches capture the complexity of policing. The best measurement approaches use a mix of outputs (measures of internal performance correlated with desirable policing outcomes) and outcomes (societal advantages provided by the police.) Surveys produce results that can be interpreted more clearly than administrative records and statistics. When we compare performance across police agencies, it shows how well the Birmingham Police Department

is performing relative to similar agencies. These efforts, initiated by the Mayor's Office and Birmingham Police Department represent a comprehensive law enforcement and social services plan for Birmingham's neighborhoods. The commitment to community involvement and information sharing will produce an environment of cooperation between the police and our citizens. Commitment from the department's management, community support, collaborative problem solving, actionable intelligence, clear goals, transparency and accountability should be the cornerstones of the Birmingham Police Department's strategy. Officers need to know there is support for their safety and recognition that what they do is important.

BEST PRACTICES

Neighborhood revitalization issues transcend organizational, industrial, and governmental boundaries. Working cross-sectorial partnerships between public, private, and non-profit groups must be established towards reaching an overarching goal of generating positive change in targeted neighborhoods. These partnerships should be part of coherent long-term housing strategies that reflect a shared vision for housing and community development in the City of Birmingham. The partnerships should facilitate building connections between organizations and agencies in areas of housing and community development, economic, finance and banking and more. Without proper coordination and consensus building, different entities often make decisions that conflict with or offset one another, not supporting any larger goal or strategy for the city. This lack of coordination reduces many potential positive impacts, even when each party is making decisions that seem efficacious when viewed on their own.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Success in this arena requires a department to carefully plan and orchestrate the activities of city departments- Economic Development, Police, Fire and Rescue, Municipal Courts- and city affiliated organizations including quasi-public boards and authorities, private developers, non-profit community based organizations, local philanthropic organizations, educational institutions, community supportive service organizations, and the like to effect change in the 99 neighborhoods within Birmingham. In this regard, the City must hire the best department Director- who possesses the most relevant experience that maps to the Administration's objectives- to establish and lead the Mayor's office of Community Revitalization.

SUB-COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Public Safety Recommendations

Public Safety is the most critical component of any neighborhood revitalization plan. As a result, the recommendations below describe discrete practices, when combined, form a comprehensive community policing plan and lays the foundation upon which the Administration can begin to rebuild the fabric of communities. Community policing is a philosophy and organizational strategy in which the police work collaboratively with individual citizens, groups of citizens, public and private organizations, community-based organizations and other city agencies to reduce violent crime, create safer communities, and enhance the health and vibrancy of neighborhoods in Birmingham, Alabama.

Public Safety: Personnel Hiring and Management

The Hiring Unit - Transparency in recruitment and hiring, in addition to the department's continued commitment to abide by federal guidelines for race and gender diversity must continue. Value, ethics, and integrity are further necessary in the recruitment process. Integrity is essential in hiring good cops. Interpersonal communication skills are also vital in choosing the right candidates, and they must possess empathy and be effective in dealing with people. The City of Birmingham must offer a comprehensive compensation package. Pay and benefit packages are important for attracting officers. Benefits such as take-home cars, pay increases, comprehensive healthcare coverage and retirement packages influence an individual's initial decision to join a department and then stay with that department once they get some experience under their belt.

Internal Affairs Division - The division should communicate its stance on different types of violations to officers and the public, help ensure uniformity in discipline, encourage an efficient settlement process that will not only move disciplinary matters to completion quickly, but also will allow all parties to find a fair disciplinary result with transparency. A base for discipline should be developed from which the Chief can depart based on specific facts, wherein they would be expected to articulate their rationale to do so in a given instance. This is similar to how federal District Court judges depart from the United States Sentencing Guidelines. The above mentioned practices should be paired with robust tracking and public reporting of disciplinary actions, increasing transparency and freedom for members of the public to participate knowledgeably in the ongoing improvement of officer discipline.

Intelligence Led Policing - There is a need to embrace and utilize technology. Agencies must embrace new technological tools and be able to speak the language of social media. The Technology Unit is charged with maintaining and training Officers in the use of the Mobile Data Terminals (MDT) assigned to all BPD patrol units. These MDTs allow officers to perform a variety of inquiries in the field that previously had to be requested through a 911 dispatcher. The terminals also allow Officers to complete their incident reports online. Utilizing contemporary technology will allow the BPD to treat people with dignity and accurate information.

Public Safety: Community Involvement

The Chief of Police - The Chief must confront any prejudice by instituting a campaign aimed at rooting out potential bigotry and intolerance among Birmingham police officers by promoting diversity in recruitment, bias training, and community involvement. Officers of the BPD must serve faithfully and honestly without prejudice; there should be a zero tolerance policy for hate and bigotry in our community. This is a proactive approach to reducing bias among officers in Birmingham's 99 neighborhoods.

Civilian Oversight Board (Police Advisory Board) - The Office of the Mayor, Birmingham City Council and the Birmingham Police Department should collectively create a Police Advisory Board made up of local citizens that represent a cross-section of the community.

Neighborhood Association Meetings - The department's law enforcement executives (chief, deputy chiefs, captains and lieutenants) should attend all of the 99 neighborhood association monthly meetings with citizens, reaching an average attendance of 1000 meetings annually. This could show a vested interest in the stakeholders of our city from the department's leadership.

Police Foundation - The Birmingham Police Department needs additional methods to foster involvement with the community. The purpose of the foundation will be to promote and fund programs that further the goals of the Police Department. It needs to be established by local businesses and civic leaders, The Birmingham Police Foundation should work to strengthen police department services and to promote public safety in Birmingham, Alabama. It will need to be an independent, non-profit 501(c)3 organization, dedicating our efforts to assuring safer neighborhoods and creating highly skilled and equipped police through better equipment, technology, education and programming.

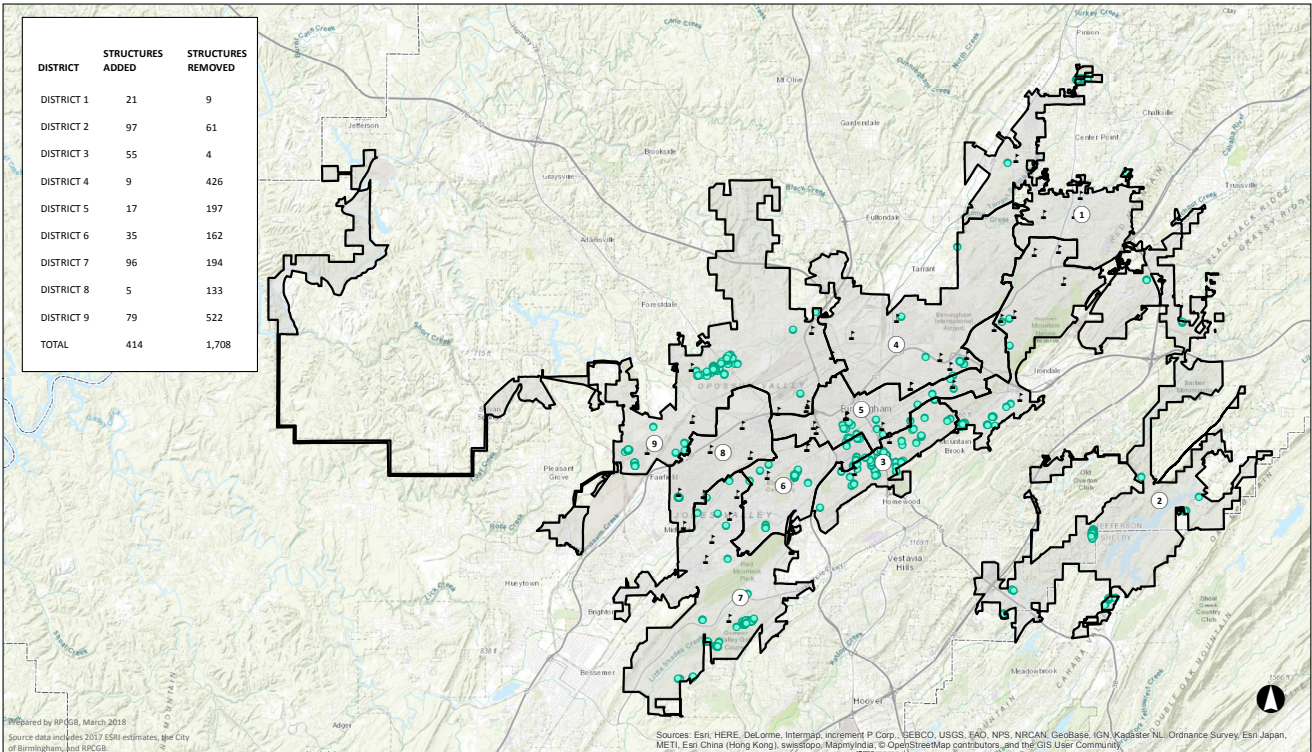
Nighborhood Revitalization Recommendations

According to Bernard Armadei's book titled, *A Systems Approach to Modeling Community Development Projects*, community development involves connecting the different components of a community in order to:

- Promote social change by building on existing community strengths and encouraging meaningful behavioral change; and
- Create partnerships to identify the technical, financial, and social solutions that match the community development level and the community's capacity; and
- Bring the community to a higher level of development through education while spearheading social entrepreneurship, infrastructure, health and economic growth through capacity building; and at the same time assuring the respect of human rights; and
- Develop solutions that link redevelopment with various sectors including technology, public health, education, poverty reduction, gender issues, security, policy, governance, etc.

The following subcommittee recommendations touch on each of the aforementioned pillars of holistic community development. The diagram below represents the relationships that each theme has to community redevelopment, and is an illustration of how the subcommittee recommendations must work in concert to contribute to a successful neighborhood revitalization strategy.

BIRMINGHAM CITY RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION BY COUNCIL DISTRICT, 2010 - 2015



SUB-COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Where's the Money?

- Develop a cost/benefit analysis tool to use as the guide to determine if the return produced by the investment of City dollars (in neighborhood revitalization projects) meets the benchmarks of the Woodfin Administration
- Create and utilize a Reporting Dashboard
- Perform standard evaluation of organization that receive federal funding toward community development programs
- Explore creative methods to maximize and leverage existing federal funds

Housing Production

- Consider all the housing needs in the City and create a roadmap that can focus, link and leverage all available resources to stabilize and increase the supply of affordable and market rate housing
- Develop an actionable implementation strategy that leads to concentrated housing production
- Support educated consumers who are well positioned to purchase housing, obtain rental housing, or maintain/improve the home they already own

No More Plans!

- The City needs to avoid developing additional plans where useful ones already exist. In this regard, the Mayor should assign one person that is knowledgeable about the plans that exist within the City administration proper, as well as those completed or under development in City- chartered entities such as the HABD, BCS, BJCTA, BAA, BWWB, BJCC, etc. The activities of these autonomous entities play a vital role in the success or failure of the city as an economic unit
- The City should earmark sufficient funds for the successful implementation of specific plans and hold responsible departments and other entities accountable for implementation
- Plans should not be developed or implemented in silos. The City and City chartered/affiliated entities should use cross-departmental input. All interdependent parties should be communicating on a regularly scheduled basis

Healthy Competitive Neighborhoods

- The presence of UAB, an urban university, presents a great opportunity for the City of Birmingham and it's communities to leverage the University's Resources for Neighborhood Revitalization by establishing an Office of Community Revitalization
- Aggressively lead the effort to implement Birmingham's Comprehensive Plan – Framework Plan – Neighborhood Improvement Plan
- Creating viable, staffed, and well-funded Community Development Corporations in each of the city's 23 communities
- Leverage multiple sources of data available such as: IBM Smarter Cities Challenge Birmingham Recommendations, Shape Birmingham, Community Framework, Neighborhoods Improvement Plans, Birmingham Open Data Portal, UAB community data
- Utilize the Land Bank to facilitate development of abandoned land and blighted property
- Convert abandoned land into green spaces using the charm and character of older blighted homes to turn them into real estate opportunities. Showcase some under-invested homes as ownership opportunities for potential homeowners.
- Utilize existing parks and recreation centers to serve as Community Resource Centers while continuing to improve and maintain current programs

Culture

Birmingham Arts, Culture, & Humanities (BACH)

Cities define themselves through expression of culture (music, food, & art), nature (architecture/landscapes/environment), commerce (tourism/recreation/econ development), social cohesion (civics, education, transportation, housing) and Quality of life (libraries, hospitals, parks, public/green space, and historic preservation). Cities that have been successful have allowed communities and influencers to have a predominant role in shaping its vision and expression of culture by:

- Creating outlets for the development of talent
- Identifying the highest and best use for cultural resources
- Streamlining and centralizing cultural affairs by establishing the Birmingham Office of Cultural Affairs (BOCA)

Covenants + Capacity Building + Partnerships

Working cross-sectorial partnerships between public, private, and non-profit groups must be established as part of coherent long-term housing strategies that reflect a shared vision for housing and community development in the city of Birmingham. Initiatives focused on making targeted neighborhoods places where existing residents want to stay and new residents want to live are needed to ensure that they move in the right direction.

- Encourage Linkages through Community Engagement
- Train both community leaders and Industry Professionals on New Strategies, Incentives and Marketing Approaches
- Facilitate Stronger Collaboration between Community Development and Economic Development Initiatives
- Consider property tax penalties for blighted and abandoned properties
- Revise the role and responsibilities of community resource officers (to become community development officers, facilitating partnerships that lead to revitalization)
- Establish design review committees for all neighborhoods and neighborhood commercial districts in the city

The City should work towards the attraction of retention of various groups in targeted neighborhoods, in hopes of bringing commitment and resources to those areas. Properties with declining values become distressed as owners see little benefit to maintaining or rehabilitation them, and developers have no incentive to target these neighborhoods because they cannot anticipate a reasonable return on investment or acquire necessary debt financing. With people tending to leave these neighborhoods in large numbers, and residents often increasingly temporary or transient, the social connections of communities often decay.

Youth and Recreation

- Create a clearinghouse that certifies nonprofits that work with children
- Create capacity building programs for potential and existing nonprofits
- Maximizing the use of existing recreation facilities
- Make ongoing investments in programming and facilities
- Collaborate with youth focused organizations

Please visit www.birminghamal.gov/woodfinway to download our full Digital Appendix.

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

SCOPE OF REVIEW

Education and Workforce Development constitutes the core means by which we prepare our children to succeed in life. One cannot exist without the other. A high-quality education is essential in preparing students to graduate from high school and/or college, ready to enter the workforce and support a higher quality of life. An intense and collaborative focus of workforce needs, generated from employers and the general marketplace, are required for students to understand where their brightest future may lie. The two efforts, however, must work closely together to provide our children the greatest hope and opportunity for success.

The Education and Workforce Committee (EWC) has examined both education and workforce development in Birmingham and the region surrounding it. The Committee has focused on how the Mayor's Office can provide constructive support to both Education and Workforce Development efforts in Birmingham. It has become clear that the City needs cooperation, support, and most of all, leadership.

While there is no lack of workforce programming among regional agencies and community partners, the EWC sees a lack of cohesion among their various efforts and targeted goals. With that said, Birmingham would thrive from a city-led workforce development program to be facilitated from the Mayor's Office. This program would consist of dedicated personnel and resources that offer cross-system collaborations with city and state governments, non-profit organizations, education entities, and the business community. Building on successes such as Innovate Birmingham, the Mayor's office should expand public/private partnerships to accomplish the recommendations and goals in this report. The EWC also recommends the appointment of a Workforce Development Director and an Education Director to implement the recommendations in this report.

It should be noted, many recommendations in this report involve the Birmingham City School system (BCS), which is currently engaged in its own strategic planning process. The EWC recommends for the Mayor's office to monitor the formation of the strategic plan and work cooperatively to modify this report to be consistent with BCS.

PROCESS & METHODOLOGY

The EWC began the transition period by conducting interviews with the department heads of the Department of Youth Services and the Birmingham Public Library. The EWC created a large committee and a core working group. The core working group was broken into six subcommittees to research and report recommendations on the following areas:

1. Partnership (i.e. Cooperation between the Mayor's Office and BCS)
2. Birth through Pre-K
3. Wrap-Around Services
4. Promise Scholarship
5. Workforce Development
6. Inventory (i.e. Third-party assets supporting BCS and students)

The EWC held one public input session, four core working group meetings, and thirteen subcommittee meetings. Overall, eighty-five citizens engaged in this process.

PUBLIC INPUT

Four major themes evolved from the public input discussion.

1. K-12 Education System

- a. Improve students' proficiency in reading by third grade.
- b. Improve proficiency in math by eighth grade.
- c. Increase the percentage of students that graduate college or leave high school career-ready.

2. Out-of-School Programs (e.g. birth to pre-k, after school programs, and summer learning programs)

- a. Improve by providing students with the greatest opportunity for hope and success.

3. Workforce

- a. Create a more cohesive and collaborative process that will bring together educators, the business community, and workforce development experts to create a workforce plan focused on high demand careers—current and future.

4. Overall Collaboration

- a. Teamwork among all stakeholders; including parents, students, businesses, and non-profits, to improve education and the readiness of the City's workforce. While there are many activities ongoing by numerous interested stakeholders, the overall cooperation and collaboration among these groups are weak and leads to missed opportunities for our children.



BEST PRACTICES

The Committee studied Best Practices in Louisville, KY, Nashville, TN, Atlanta, GA, and Tuscaloosa, AL. These cities have used innovative, integrated, and collaborative programs to address the needs of education and workforce development, and to help bridge the gap between them. One common denominator in most successful programs is the active engagement of industry leaders in shaping and guiding the workforce development process, and effectively communicating to the education community the needs of industry both today and into the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The EWC concludes that there are several opportunities where the leadership of the Mayor and his staff could provide significant value. This leadership must be supportive, collaborative, and team-oriented. There are many ongoing efforts and tremendous resources committed and available to assist in providing our children hope and preparing them to pursue highly successful careers in Birmingham.

The EWC recommends the following.

1. Partnership

a. To date, the relationship between the Mayor's Office and the BCS System has been weak or non-existent. However, there are many opportunities for support and collaboration between the two organizations. EWC recommends a formal compact be formed between the Mayor's Office and BCS; to work together and support each other, ensuring every child in Birmingham is prepared for college, career, and a successful productive life.

2. Workforce Development

a. The EWC recommends the Mayor's Office provide leadership toward regional workforce alignment.

i. Create a position in the Mayor's Office focused on engaging and coordinating the various stakeholder organizations and provide leadership in developing a single coordinating organization, which includes the incentivizing of workforce partners to formalize their role. Encourage top industry executives to engage in this organization.

ii. Adopt a Cradle to Career model to guide the Workforce and Education Directors in setting coordinated goals and associated metrics.

iii. Utilize findings in the upcoming Burning Glass report to help lead an ongoing conversation with municipal and county leaders on aligning resources with workforce needs, and creating formalized workforce pipelines consisting of high-demand careers with a primary to post-secondary range. Research and adopt new and innovative incentive plans focused on human capital, such as incentives for job training and housing based on residency in Birmingham neighborhoods.

iv. Align existing DYS co-op programs with partners, industry leaders, and workforce pipeline goals. Provide leadership to create and support a centralized, robust, and up-to-date job portal where youth and underemployed adults can connect directly to jobs.

b. EWC recommends creating and implementing a Promise Scholarship program that would provide last dollar support to all eligible BCS high school graduates attending one of the two local community colleges residing in Jefferson County.

i. EWC recommends that a part of the Promise Scholarship program include a plan that will offer incentives to graduates to pursue careers in high demand occupations such as those identified in the Burning Glass report.

ii. The EWC recommends that funding for the Promise Scholarship Program be done through a public/private partnership.

iii. The EWC recommends the Mayor's Office hire an educational program person who will assist in the development and implementation of the college promise program.

3. Birth through Pre-K

a. The Office of the Mayor should partner with BCS, independent schools, religious institutions, and private day care providers to establish early childhood learning centers and additional pre-k classrooms, with the goal to offer Pre-K to all children.

b. Utilize early childhood centers to promote a public education program for parents of children birth to four years old focusing on the importance of early education.

4. Wrap-Around Services

a. EWC recommends collaborating with the Birmingham Public Library (BPL) to leverage the many BPL resources in the education and workforce development areas, including opportunities to expand summer reading programs, job training, and internship opportunities.



b EWC recommends exploring a partnership with the Summer Adventures in Learning Program to expand the availability of the program to students who are behind grade level.

c. The United Way of Central Alabama currently provides its 211 service, which includes an extensive database of available social services to the citizens of Birmingham.

d. EWC recommends DYS be assigned as the lead agency, in partnership with BCS, to:

- i. Create a comprehensive needs assessment for wrap-around services.
- ii. Convene potential service providers.
- iii. Determine capacity and growth opportunities.
- iv. Create a comprehensive asset map.
- v. Develop a research-based model for the provision of wrap around services, including but not limited to summer learning programs and after school programs.

5. The EWC believes an inventory/asset map of community assets relating to the Birmingham City Schools should ultimately be owned by the Birmingham City Schools with the support of key partners such as the United Way of Central Alabama and the Birmingham Education Foundation.

Please visit www.birminghamal.gov/woodfinway to download our full Digital Appendix.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

SCOPE OF REVIEW

On October 23, 2017, Mayor Woodfin convened the Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (E&ED) Transition Committee. Our committee was charged with listening to key stakeholders in Birmingham's entrepreneurship and economic development communities, collecting relevant data and uncovering insights to further develop and operationalize elements of the Woodfin Plan. In many ways, the Woodfin Plan represents a set of ideas derived from a two-year listening tour conducted by Mayor Randall Woodfin while he campaigned across the City of Birmingham. We set out to define the City's role in the design and execution of an inclusive economy, and this report represents a distillation of ideas and best practices, challenges and solutions, old programs to continue and new initiatives to implement.

Our committee benefited from the input of a number of community leaders, small business owners, residents, corporate representatives, entrepreneurs, developers, investors, and job-seekers. We studied economic data and situated it within the context of the Woodfin Plan. Furthermore, we looked beyond Birmingham to understand where we might be able to learn from—and adapt evidence-based practices in other cities. This report provides an overview of that process, explores the themes that emerged from our transition study, and outlines recommendations for the Woodfin Administration.

PROCESS & METHODOLOGY

Our committee approached the transition process with three distinct processes: (a) collecting data with key stakeholders in economic development; (b) listening to community members, residents, small business owners, job-seekers, and talent seekers; and (c) researching best-practices in peer cities. Taken together across these three processes of analysis, we synthesized findings into core insights and concrete recommendations that corresponded with those insights. Throughout the process, we also formed a core working group that met to identify, organize, and compile best practices from other cities to build out a long term cohesive economic and community development strategy for Birmingham. The core committee maintained a hyper-focus on including tactics for the first 100 days in areas of redefining economic development, community development, corporate business recruitment and retention and entrepreneurship/innovation.

Collecting data with key economic development stakeholders

Our first step was to solicit input and collect data from key stakeholders in economic development to learn more about their respective roles in the ecosystem, the dynamics of their relationship with the city, and their funding streams. We also deliberately sought to learn how they understood the goals of economic development in Birmingham and their specific role in executing a strategy aligned with that vision.

- Between October 23 and December 9, 2017, we met with the Mayor's Office of Economic Development, Rev Birmingham, Urban Impact, Alabama Power Company, Birmingham Airport Authority, Birmingham Business Alliance, Birmingham Parking Authority, Jefferson County Port Authority and Birmingham Construction Industry Authority.
- On December 5, 2017 we hosted a roundtable discussion with a group of ~15 entrepreneurs at the Innovation Depot to solicit input on how Birmingham can best support entrepreneurs as they start and grow their businesses.
- In addition to collecting qualitative and quantitative data locally, we turned to external sources to learn more about the Birmingham economy from a comparative perspective, including: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Burning Glass & Center for Adult Education & Learning, Policy Link, McKinsey & Company's Public Sector team, Raj Chetty's Opportunity Project, Alabama Department of Labor, and the Brookings Institute. Among these sources, we collected relevant data (including labor force participation by industry, forward-looking occupational and skill demands, education attainment levels, and wage gaps by race) to more clearly define and clarify the goals for Birmingham's economic development strategy.



Listening to community members, residents, small business owners, job-seekers and talent seekers

- On December 5, 2017 we convened the ~40 members (small business owners, entrepreneurs, ecosystem builders and citizens) nominated to serve on the full committee to solicit input on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to Birmingham's economic landscape and obtain feedback on a new proposal for economic development goals and associated metrics.
- On January 22, 2018, we hosted a community input meeting at the CrossPlex and with ~150 attendees to solicit input on what the city of Birmingham could do, whether by itself or in partnership, with business, labor, civic, or institutional entities to promote the creation of quality jobs for all, and spur the economy in local neighborhoods.
 1. At this community input meeting, we also collected surveys with responses to a single, straightforward question: "what would you like to see help the economy in your neighborhood?"
 2. 58 neighborhoods were represented
- On February 7, 2018 we again convened the ~40 members (small business owners, entrepreneurs, ecosystem builders and citizens) nominated to serve on the full committee to solicit input on building a comprehensive talent strategy in Birmingham and building a template for public-private partnerships.
- On a forthcoming date, we will host a focus group with ~15 local real estate developers to better understand their vision for Birmingham's economy and solicit their input on the modern role of a City in economic development.

BEST PRACTICES

Alongside our data collection phase, we prioritized looking to other cities globally to understand best practices. With the understanding that many of our challenges and opportunities are not unique to Birmingham, we looked to places such as Detroit, Nashville, Pittsburgh, Indianapolis, Chattanooga, Atlanta, New Orleans, Barcelona, London, Baltimore, Boston, Charlotte & Toronto to learn about how they had organized their economic development strategy and to understand what programs they implemented to successfully navigate some of the challenges and capitalize on opportunities in the current economy. In addition to turning to other cities, we turned to national and global thinkers such as Amy Liu and The Brookings Institute Metropolitan Policy Program, the Kauffman Foundation, the Lumina Foundation, Jennifer Bradley and the Aspen Institute's Urban Innovation Initiative, Imperative's Aaron Hurst, and others to understand the optimal role and tactics for a City in the modern economy.

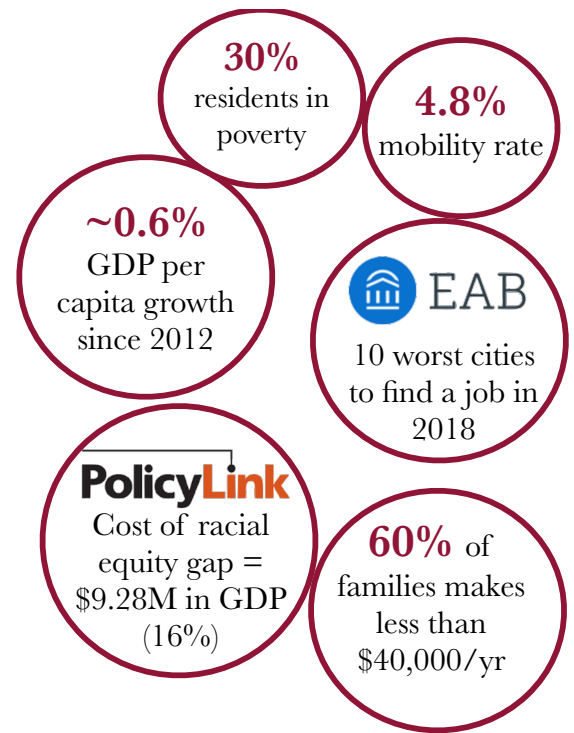
Key Insights

Throughout the transition process, we looked for patterns in the data to identify themes that consistently emerged across residents and stakeholder groups. We listened to people articulate the needs in their neighborhoods, their struggles to obtain a business license, and the opportunity for small business mentorship. Via these conversations, meetings, and subsequent research we developed five key insights:

Insight 1: Birmingham's Economy: A Tale of Two Cities

With a booming downtown development scene, and waves of ribbon cuttings and positive press, a growing start-up scene and an unemployment rate of 4%, it may seem as if Birmingham's economy is thriving. The city's low cost of living is frequently touted, and in 2017 Birmingham made the list of top ten cities for first time homebuyers. We have been named among the best cities for millennials to start a business, and the Innovation Depot is bursting at the seams, embodying that momentum accelerated by Velocity. Named a TechHire city in 2015, Birmingham posted the second fastest IT job growth in the country as a percentage of its IT workforce. Our city also consistently contains among the highest per-capita concentration of healthcare jobs

However, the positive momentum outlined above does not tell the full tale of the Birmingham economy. Over the past decade, Birmingham's economic and population growth has been anemic compared to our peer cities, and even where growth has occurred, it has not necessarily led to economic prosperity. Fully 30% of Birmingham, and nearly 42% of women and families are living in poverty. A recent report indicated that out of America's 182 largest cities, Birmingham ranked 178th in terms of a job-seekers' ability to find a job.




According to the Equality of Opportunity Project, the odds of a child born into the bottom quintile of the income distribution in Birmingham earning an income in the top quintile of the distribution in his/her lifetime are approximately 1 in 25. Nearly 60% of Birmingham families have a household income less than \$40,000 per year--well below Birmingham's estimated livable wage estimated at \$62,380. Although our GDP as a city has increased by about 8% since 2012, our GDP per capita has only increased about 0.6% in the same time period, implying that growth has not translated into shared prosperity across our community.

This is the tension in which our city dwells: on the one hand, there is momentum in the innovation economy, opportunity to grow in one of America's fastest growing industries and a catalytic development effort in our downtown. On the other hand, poverty and joblessness distress many neighborhoods in our community.

Insight 2: Birmingham needs a clear, consistent, and strategic vision for economic development.

A large number of stakeholders claimed that there was no apparent vision for economic development in Birmingham--leading to overlapping missions and an ineffective use of resources. The effects of a fragmented strategy have been compounded by the absence of an effective infrastructure for communication and collaboration both between economic development stakeholders and with the city, which has resulted in deep-rooted distrust. Finally, absent a core vision, there are no clear strategic goals and objective metrics upon which inclusive economic development efforts can be assessed. This must change.

 **Insight:** Birmingham's lack of a unified and strategic vision for economic development is the root of many problems.



Insight 3: Birmingham's economic development strategy must be modernized.

The current structure of the Office of Economic Development does not reflect the vision of a modern, forward-looking economy. Processes, key performance indicators, and operational structures must be established to implement the vision of the Opportunity Agenda, including data-driven experimentation in piloting programs, integrating citizen-focused design, optimizing collaboration and measuring cross-functional goals between departments. These changes must be properly resourced to harness the full potential of the city's economic development capacity.

Insight 4: Data systems need to be organized and optimized strategically.

Data must be collected and coordinated to align with the Opportunity Agenda. A key priority of this administration is to support women and minority small business owners. Based on the data we are currently collecting, we cannot achieve that mission. We currently do not know how many women and minority business owners are in Birmingham, much less the struggles they face. We must define our goals and be rigorous and disciplined in our data collection and analysis so that we can effectively allocate resources aligned to the inclusive economic development mission. Clear and consistent data collection and dissemination will provide accountability within and across departments and offer greater performance transparency, a key initiative of the Woodfin Administration. Likewise, these data should be clearly defined and accessible in a dashboard for citizens.

Insight 5: People are eager to be involved in shaping the City's economic vision

Throughout the transition process, we met with and solicited input from nearly 250 residents of Birmingham. Time and time again in our meetings we heard that people were excited, energetic, hopeful and eager to participate in the design and execution of an inclusive economy.

Birmingham should be a place where the American dream can be realized, and that will take a coordinated vision and strategically aligned action. We need to re-make the goals of economic development, re-prioritize the way we address challenges for job creation, and re-double our efforts in talent development, retention and attraction.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Mayor Woodfin campaigned on "Putting People First," and we believe that is more than a slogan; it is a strategy to govern. The following recommendations align with that vision.

Recommendation 1: Clearly state the vision for economic development: Birmingham will become a hub for qualified, diverse talent, propelling shared prosperity through innovation and inclusive growth.

Aligned with this vision, the City needs to define strategic objectives for achieving that vision, and prepare a clear set of objectives to align stakeholders in workforce development, business attraction, growth, and retention. Refine data collection processes to ensure that these goals are objectively measured, and hold resource allocation accountable to performance.

Strategic goals should be rooted in comprehensive talent strategies, built upon distinct industry clusters and occupational competencies in the region (using data from Burning Glass and the Center for Adult Education and Learning), focusing on intergenerational and social mobility, equity-driven human capital formation, and strategic investments for innovation and productivity.

- Redefine the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of Birmingham's economy to measure inclusive growth as opposed to aggregate growth (i.e. GDP per capita as opposed to GDP).
- Implement national frameworks to focus on quality job creation.
- Design data collection infrastructures, in collaboration with public and private regional partners, for identified KPIs and determine which metrics should be included for transparency in performance via a Data Dashboard.
 1. These metric indicators will serve as the subject of regular discussions for public interventions and civic investments.
 2. This unified approach decreases administrative costs by eliminating duplicate investments of time in collecting, organizing, and presenting data while holding economic stakeholders accountable to transparent, objective data.

Recommendation 2: Adequately resource the vision of the Opportunity Agenda by focusing organizational structures in the Office of Economic Development and distributing resources to execute key initiatives:

- Employ a small business ombudsperson to focus on compliance with clearly stated minority participation goals developed in accordance with an updated Disparity Study.
- Employ a Director of Workforce Development in the Department of Innovation and Economic Opportunity to act as the key architect of Birmingham's comprehensive talent development, recruitment and retention strategy. This post will be charged with strengthening partnerships between primary, secondary, and post-secondary education institutions, regional employers and the City.
- Employ a Director of Innovation to develop mechanisms to deliver economic prosperity to the City through implementing cost-effective, evidence-based strategies. This may include, but is not limited to, instituting innovative programming, novel land/real estate use, partnerships with local institutions, and equitable financing.
- Employ positions deliberately cross-listed with economic development and other departments including a Neighborhood liaison with Community Development, a data analyst to develop a dashboard dynamically with IMS, and a Director of Urban Planning with Planning, Engineering and Permitting.
- Launch the Office of Business Opportunity and employ a Small Business Opportunity Officer to focus on development of the following projects as an immediate response to the needs expressed by the small business community ecosystem:
 1. This person must work with the Department of Finance to support and sustain the work of entrepreneurs and small business owners in Birmingham by working to reduce or eliminate barriers to start businesses.
 2. Overhaul the website to focus on actionable resources for small business owners with feedback from the Small Business Council.
 3. In collaboration with the department of Finance, move online licensing to the Office of Business Opportunity and collect data on women-minority- and disadvantaged business enterprises to ensure appropriate data is collected for equity goals.
 4. We recommend that the Office of Business Opportunity form the Small Business Advisory Council to co-design a small business growth strategy for the City and act as an advisory board on user experience.

Recommendation 3: Birmingham should focus on becoming a case study for sustainable, effective public-private partnerships. Birmingham can capitalize on the opportunities before it with strong public-private partnerships in K-12 education and workforce development, community and economic development, philanthropy, higher education, infrastructure and land use. Collaboration must be at the core of the strategy to ensure that all dimensions of our economy are taken into account, and the organizational structure at the City needs to reflect that.

Reconstituting the Mayor's Business Leadership Roundtable, the Woodfin Administration should regularly convene leaders in the private sector to focus on moving the needle on key objectives where partnership is essential, including data-driven performance assessment for key goals and discussing talent development, retention, and attraction strategies. These partnerships are critical feedback loops that lay the groundwork for important community-wide investments.

Recommendation 4: Align economic growth packages, including incentives, with a strategy that puts people (i.e. human capital) first. Audit current and past incentive tools to assess the financial return of past incentive arrangements. Diversify the toolbox of incentives to benefit people creating quality jobs such as entrepreneurs, small business owners in addition to corporate business owners. Below are some of incentives worth exploring:

- Grow talent: invest in training assistance funding for start-ups and small business so that current employees can up-skill; analyze student debt retirement plans.
- Attract talent: consider supplementing wages and salaries for demand-driven occupations so that coming to Birmingham yields a higher income.
- Retain talent: evaluate a rent-subsidy to encourage workers to move into Birmingham's neighborhoods.
- Encourage Innovation: Provide a matching program for SBIR/STTR grants
- Neighborhood Revitalization: Neighborhood Development fund for facade re-development & small business commercial revitalization incentives.

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TRANSPARENT & EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The committee performed reviews of six (6) key city departments (Human Resources, City Clerk's Office, IMS/Technology, Finance, Legal, and Mobile Equipment) focusing on five key (5) aspects within each department. The five key aspects reviewed included existing management and key personnel perceptions of the following:

1. Major responsibilities, delivering on their mission, staffing levels.
2. Documentation of policies, procedures, standards and performance measurement tools currently in use.
3. Challenges/Obstacles/Barriers to consistently delivering the administration's core values, known or perceived barriers to transparency.
4. Known forms of waste leading to inefficiency - excess employee time on hand (waiting); work over processing or overproduction; excess or wasteful practices involving parts inventory, supplies on hand; mistakes or errors creating rework, waste of transportation, waste of movement, organizational culture issues, or any policy or procedure impacting overall operational efficiency.
5. Known and unknown risks, e.g. safety, unnecessary expense exposure, illegal actions, etc.

PROCESS & METHODOLOGY

The committee consisted of thirty-one (31) citizens who each share in our Mayor's commitment to transparent and efficient government, and respect Birmingham citizens' right to a transparent and efficiently operating local government. From our citizens group, seven (7) subcommittees were formed each focusing on a city department. Methodology of the reviews included in-person interviews with department heads and key staff; relevant documentation and reporting which might help tell their story and provide information relating to the five key review aspects mentioned above.

Human Resources Department - Challenges/Obstacles/Barriers:

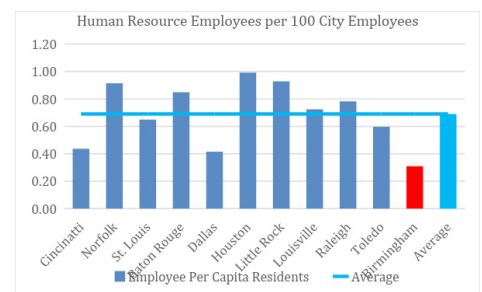
- Inappropriate/inadequate organizational structure without appropriate checks and balances
- Staffing (quantity & quality) to support the city's active and retiree base
- Difficulty in attracting talent and excessive or low turnover rates
- Fitness centers aligned with HR
- Lack of/inadequate technology solutions

Metrics

- 2017 Budget Salary Data shows more than 4,200 active employees (full time, part time and seasonal), and thousands of pensioners (retirees and beneficiaries)

Best Practices

- According to the latest SHRM (Society of Human Resource Management) Human Capital Benchmarking Study, the best practice HR-to-Employee Ratio for a company with 2,500 to 7,499 is around 0.53 (1 HR resource per 200 employees). ***The ratio includes HR professionals who work as generalists and those in areas such as benefits, compensation, labor relations and organizational effectiveness. The ratio excludes payroll and training-and-development employees.*



Human Resource Employees per 100 City Employees			
City	2017 Human Resources FTE	Employees	
		Per 100 Gov. City	City
Cincinnati	22	0.44	5,041
Norfolk	36	0.91	3,937
St. Louis	44	0.65	6,777
Baton Rouge	38	0.85	4,477
Dallas	53	0.42	12,755
Houston	145	0.99	14,629
Little Rock	20	0.93	2,154
Louisville	45	0.72	6,219
Raleigh	33	0.78	4,218
Toledo	16	0.60	2,681
Birmingham*	13	0.31	4,210
Average		0.69	
Average W/O Bham.		0.73	

*The 13 FTE Employees for Birmingham does not include the 15 HR Fitness Employees under HR as well

Recommendations

- Revised organizational chart
- Align HR: Employee ratio with benchmarking study staffing guides
- Enhance talent/skill/leadership pools
- Address Jefferson County Personnel Board
- Align fitness centers with Parks and Recreations
- Implement technology and process automation

City Clerk - Challenges/Obstacles/Barriers:

- City Clerk's attestation of Mayor's physical signature on each contract, official records
- No Purchasing Department or contract management Information Technology solution
- Volume/staffing to support Weed Abatement Notifications
- Public records requests policy
- Inadequate location for conducting Absentee voting
- Secure records storage vault

Best Practices

- Contracts Management Department/Division
- Electronic Signatures- a cursor review of the Code of Alabama indicates that electronic signatures are acceptable forms for legal documents
- Perform cost benefit analysis to determine the best approach to weed abatement in house. This will help determine if using an outside vendor would be best

Recommendations

- Implement the New World Contracts Management Solution
- Analyze, enhance and automate Public Records Requests (city-wide)
- Find a location for Absentee Voting that meets the State of Alabama voting regulation
- Relocate and/or secure the records storage vault, and increase capacity

IMS/Technology - Challenges/Obstacles/Barriers:

- Decentralized IT groups
- Difficulty attracting and retaining quality talent
- Lack of funding, support, and adherence for key Business and Technology solutions

Best Practices

- Centralized Technology (IT) department for the City
- Robust and centralized Technology Project Management
- Capital Funding Budget

Recommendations

- Effective collaboration between decentralized and centralized technology leaders
- Manage relationship with Jefferson County Personnel Board
- Develop capital funding plans for maintaining/enhancing/upgrading technology resources, e.g. business applications, technology infrastructure, etc.
- Create IT policies and solutions designed to support efficiency, transparency, and compliance

Finance: Revenues and Expenses - Challenges, Obstacles, Barriers

- Revenues have had an annualized growth of 1.02% since 2008. The city's total expenses have increased by 2.84% since 2008. The city's General Fund (GF) ended with a \$2.5M deficit.

Costs

- Based on review of 28 other cities, Birmingham has the highest number of city employees per capita. This high FTE count is consistent across most departments.
- Birmingham exceeded its overtime budget by 250% (\$6M budget vs. \$21M actual).

Revenues

- Property taxes are on the decline and have not recovered to a 2008 level.
- Limited ability to increase tax or change the mixture of taxes to stabilize the volatility of the City's tax annual tax revenues.

Liabilities

- The city has \$50M in annual debt service, or about 12% of its entire budget.
- The city does not have a comprehensive repair and maintenance plan for its capital assets and infrastructure. This City has underinvested in the maintenance of its own assets as well as the infrastructure of the City itself.
- Birmingham has underfunding its pension for at least a decade.

Process

- The City does not have single source data collection and analysis that would allow departments to share relevant information that can be used for better planning of city operations.
- Too much data and not enough context with respect to communicating the city financial position to the mayor's office, the city council, and the citizens of Birmingham.
- No historical accountability for low productivity. No incentives for saving the city money.
- Budget process to be revamped to encourage efficiencies across departments and longer-term planning.

Metrics

- The expenses of Birmingham need to be benchmarked to comparable cities with the goal of achieving best in class practices.
- These benchmark costs will include personnel costs, headcount, contracted services, OT, expenditures by department, investments in future economic growth (like tax abatements or investments in stadiums), as well as return on city assets that the city does not need to own.
- The revenue benchmarks will highlight the economic sensitivity of sales tax and business license revenues. These metrics will also review the level of revenue that Birmingham raises given its citizen base and commuter base.

Best Practices

- Create a 3-year forecasts of revenues, expenses, debt service, capital needs, and future financings.
- Create financial reporting formats to increase transparency and provide context to the citizens of the city.
- Develop benchmarks and analysis into staff hiring, training, on-boarding, retention, and utilization.

Recommendations

- Develop a culture that inspires and rewards innovation and improvement; empower managers to cut costs and increase productivity. Train managers to better manage the workforce.

Finance: Pension & Other Post-Employment Benefit Liabilities - Challenges/Obstacles/Barriers

\$750mm Pension Liability

- City of Birmingham's Net Pension liability stands at approximately \$750 million at 6-30-2017.
- As recently as 2002 the City's pension funds were overfunded. Since 2002, the City has consistently underfunded its actuarial required contribution by over \$80 million.

\$161mm Other Post-Employment Benefits

- Obligations are made up of benefits that retirees receive at the start of retirement. It is primarily made up of healthcare benefits and does not include pension benefits.
- The actuarial accrued liability as of 6-30-2018 was \$161 million. The net liability shown on the balance sheet as of the same date was \$65 million. The \$65 million liability was developed by the City by underfunding the annual required contribution since 2008.
- There are no fund assets for this obligation. The City uses a pay as you go method making annual contributions that funds its annual obligation.

City has limited financial flexibility

- Fitch Ratings downgraded the credit ratings of the City's general obligation bonds, warrants and outstanding revenue bonds issued by the Commercial Development Authority on 1-13-2017. Fitch specifically referred to the "significant increase in the net pension liability and the revised criteria highlights risk associated with the city's pension plans from the standpoint of long-term affordability and limitations on spending flexibility".

City must address limited choices

- Recent changes that increased the City's contribution to the pension funds will do little to change the overall trajectory of the increasing liability
- Significant reforms that would result in significant reductions in already promised benefits to current employees and retirees would face stiff opposition and face major legal and political obstacles

Metrics

- We need to compare the city's benefits to other cities.
- We need to compare our obligations as a percent of our budget to financially stable cities to understand the extent to which our revenues will have to go to the pension as opposed to other important areas like public safety and economic development.

Best Practices

- We need to lay out a plan to demonstrate to our employees, our bond holders, as well as our citizens that we will bring this pension deficit under control over a specific period. This includes increased funding and restructured benefits, at least for new employees.

Recommendations

- We need to engage with the rating agencies to ensure the actions we take have the desired impact to keep the capital markets open to Birmingham at competitive rates.

Legal - Challenges/Obstacles/Barriers

- Issues of responsiveness to other departments
- Low morale and lack of team environment
- Determining what files need outside counsel, as some routine matters have been assigned to outside counsel rather than handled in-house by legal department lawyers
- Better budgeting for potential losses regarding pending claims against City

Metrics

- Employees: 27 attorneys (3 unfilled positions)/5 paralegals/9 staff members in City Legal Department
- Three divisions: (a) Real Estate/Transactions (8 attorneys); (b) Prosecutors (6 attorneys/2 are unfilled); (c) Litigation (11 attorneys/1 unfilled, plus a claims administrator)
- Fiscal Budget/Expenditures: 2015: \$7 million/\$6.7 million (\$1.5 million paid to outside counsel); 2016 \$7.1 million/\$6.6 million (\$1 million paid to outside counsel); 2017: \$7.2 million/\$9.5 million (\$1 million paid to outside counsel, \$2.8 million added to original budget during fiscal year to pay claims)

Best Practices

- Utilize/supplement existing City Law software system to organize the assignment of files and to track these assignments.
- Develop a written request form for departments to use each time a department seeks assistance from legal dept.
- Require departments to submit written request forms to City Attorney.
- Lawyers should employ City Law software when a file is assigned and update progress each month.
- Create standards for follow up with departments to provide status of file on regular basis.

Recommendations

- Evaluate whether attorneys meet expectations of the department
- Assess workload of each attorney and reassign files where necessary
- Determine whether more in-house lawyers need to be hired based on workload and expertise needed for files
- Assess whether compensation of in-house lawyers is consistent with other similar law departments
- Assess career development and training
- Reward good performance of attorneys

Mobile Equipment - Challenges/Obstacles/Barriers

- 1,630 of 1,900 rolling stock operational equipment items have fully depreciated
- Total inventory of rolling stock is unknown.
- Unable to execute submitted capital expenditures; no multi-year capital expenditure plan for the city
- Difficulties in hiring the right talent
- No fixed asset audit has been performed in the past 10 years
- Significant issues with maintenance garage: built in the 1950s to service 600 rolling stock items

Metrics

- Average age of fleet
- Cost of maintaining fleet
- Performance of fleet
- Headcount and productivity measures per head

Best Practices

- We need a fixed asset audit.
- We need a multi-year cap-ex plan to upgrade the equipment.

Recommendations

- We need to develop shared accountability with cost of maintaining equipment over and above regular maintenance to be paid for by the users of the equipment to discourage abuse of the equipment.
- We need to work with the personnel board to ensure we see the right talent for 21st century maintenance.

Communications - Challenges/Obstacles/Barriers:

- Outdated Website
- Automation & tracking of public records requests and requests for information/FOIA from the media
- Lacks staff to be proactive in public relations and marketing

Best Practices

- Robust online presence to include website and social media
- Process automation as it relates to requests from the public and media
- Robust public relations, marketing, and communications engine

Recommendations

- Support transparency and efficiency by implementing a new and enhanced Website
- Automate & track public record requests and requests for information/FOIA
- Staff the department appropriately so it can function as the marketing/communications engine for the City

Please visit www.birminghamal.gov/woodfinway to download our full Digital Appendix.

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE REPORT

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The Woodfin Transition Team's Social Justice Committee was tasked with addressing some of the toughest challenges our city faces. Complex challenges require innovative solutions, and innovative solutions are created when members of the community come together to integrate their ideas, knowledge, and expertise. This is exactly what took place in the Social Justice Committee. Following Mayor Woodfin's motto of "Putting People First," the committee started with the ideas and suggestions of Birmingham Citizens. Residents are tired of not having their voices heard, and our goal was to change that by being as inclusive as possible. Social justice means justice for all neighborhoods and the voices of all people. Members across Birmingham's many communities spoke and our committee simply synthesized all the ideas into an implementable format. The Social Justice Committee started with five subcommittees to help navigate ideas into areas of interest: Civil and Human Rights, Health Disparities, Poverty Reduction, Environmental Justice and Sustainability, Art Education and Cultural Exposure.

Civil and Human Rights- Civil rights are a rich part of Birmingham's history and our feature for tourism. The goal of the Civil and Human Rights subcommittee was to no longer allow civil rights to be a part of our historical past, but to bring the issues we face into focus in the present, and develop plans for transformation in the future. Birmingham not only owns their past achievements, but we hope to continue to set an example for other cities by maintaining the drive for human rights and build on the work of those that came before us. Some of the initiatives proposed by this subcommittee to carry out this goal include criminal justice reform, addressing homelessness, and intersectional approaches to rebuilding and repairing community ties.

Health Disparities- Another proud feature of the city is UAB, a world-renowned medical school and hospital. Yet many in the city still suffer due to health disparities and pressing health issues. The goal of the Health Disparities subcommittee was to begin developing strategic partnerships within the city to address health issues. By creating partnerships with other leaders in the community like UAB, St. Vincent's Hospital, and other medical institutions we can create more proactive solutions to health problems by making mental health, maternal and child health, and sexual health priorities, provide more inclusive care, and tackle difficult obstacles to healthy living like food security and addiction.

Poverty Reduction- Over 60,000 Birmingham residents live in poverty. This is an issue that plagues our city, but has no simple solution. The goal of the Poverty Reduction subcommittee was to listen to the needs of those facing poverty and help develop strategic plans that can be implemented immediately and ease the stress of poverty, while longer-term plans like job creation take shape. Short-term initiatives require that agency and strength be given back to the communities currently suffering and create opportunities for individuals within these neighborhoods to choose their own pathway into just and equitable living conditions. Initiatives of this subcommittee like participatory budgeting and the Dynamite Hill-Smithfield Community Land Trust would allow residents to engage in democratic practices and partnerships within their own neighborhoods to strengthen communities from the bottom-up. Further initiatives include empowering individuals by giving them the tools to make changes, for example, providing Wi-Fi to students, supporting programs like U-Turn that helps individuals develop strategic career plans, or the Young Women's Initiative that invests in the lives of young women of color.

Environmental Justice and Sustainability- North Birmingham is ranked number five on the National Priorities List distributed by the EPA. Due to decades of environmental pollution, many communities have suffered. The EPA has chosen North Birmingham as a Superfund site, but it's up to the city to take ownership over these initiatives. The city must not only revitalize neighborhoods that have been harmed, but also take stock in the sustainability of our environmental future. The goal of the Environmental Justice and Sustainability subcommittee is ensuring the city's investment in our future by proposing initiatives that address brownfields and pollution, maintenance of parks and green spaces, storm water mitigation and sustainability efforts like recycling, renewable energy, and residential weatherization that saves Birmingham citizens money on energy and creates jobs.

Art Education and Cultural Exposure - Finally, the Art Education and Cultural Exposure subcommittee is the glue that binds all other subcommittees together. Encouraging creativity allows for freedom of expression and allows us to tell our story as a unified Birmingham. Understanding all the diverse cultures that make up our city develops empathy, inclusion, and appreciation for all the unique stories we can learn from each other. However, many creative industries lack minority representation in the city and across the nation. This inhibits our ability to paint the full picture of Birmingham in the media. This subcommittee proposes that the city support our artists and the community at large by providing opportunities for exposure, education, experiences with art and culture. For example, after-school, summer, and internships programs for kids to identify their interests, cultivate their skills, and outline their options for creative careers that they can use to give back to their communities.

PROCESS & METHODOLOGY

During our process of gathering community input, the Social Justice Committee interacted with over 320 Birmingham residents. The full Social Justice Committee met twice for community input meetings, and subcommittees held smaller focus group meetings. The meetings were held in different neighborhoods across town to facilitate inclusion and gather a diverse scope of input. Each meeting, participants were presented with a skeleton outline of initiatives, proposed by other groups or in previous meetings, and encouraged to offer input and suggest other initiatives they believed would make Birmingham a better place.

The Social Justice Committee also worked with each of the Woodfin Transition Teams to identify cross connections in the ideas and proposals from other teams. By identifying cross connections in our initiatives, we can work towards more sustainable solutions that are rooted in many different city departments.

PUBLIC INPUT

The major theme that was addressed throughout our community input meetings was the need for the city to be a facilitator and a leader that offers resources. Too many initiatives have met dead ends when it came to implementing changes in the city with past administrations. The city needs to synthesize what is already happening, what efforts are already being made, and what still needs to be done. Having a matrix of available community resources provided by the city will empower citizens by giving them the tools to make the changes that they seek and aid in establishing partnerships with community stakeholders and non-profit organizations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Through our community input meetings, the Social Justice Committee compiled over 25 proposals and initiatives across our five subcommittee groups. All proposals can be found in the appendices of the transition report.



Currently, there is no office within City Hall dedicated to social justice initiatives. Based on our rich history of seeking justice in Birmingham and dedication to keeping this spirit alive in practice, we hope to develop an Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice as well as an Office of Sustainability within City Hall. These offices will be tasked with overseeing the long-term implementation of the proposals developed from the community input meetings. These offices would also be responsible for keeping the spirit of democracy alive by continuing to gather community input and creating more initiatives in the future. In the same spirit as the Social Justice Committee, these offices would be responsible for turning the visions of the community into a reality that can be implemented. The committee recommends that the city hire a task force of four personnel to oversee these efforts long term. The Social Justice Committee initiatives are based on community partnerships and building relationships. These proposals require very little financial funding from the city, but more so support. The human capital required for to make these goals a reality is found in the rich community input and volunteer support.

THE LOOK AHEAD

This report represents input from hundreds of citizens and refined by a handful of servant-minded leaders appointed as co-chairs of Mayor Woodfin's Transition Team.

The recommendations put forth in their report are just that – recommendations. Mayor Woodfin will explore the budgetary, legal, and staffing implications of these recommendations before committing to them.

In the meantime, there are notable initiatives that Mayor Woodfin is currently undertaking. Many of these initiatives will be implemented by the end of the year:

- **Demolish 125 dilapidated structures by Summer 2018**
- **Launch bi-monthly community Town Hall meetings by Spring 2018**
- **Submit Mayoral Term Limits to the State Legislature by Spring 2018**
- **Submit BJCC Board Reform Bill to the State Legislature by Spring 2018**
- **Complete Performance Assessment by Spring 2018**
- **Provide updates and outcomes of Operation Step Up by Spring 2018**
- **Hire 5 new Department Heads: Police, Human Resources, Information & Technology, Public Works, Finance**
- **Submit City Budget to Birmingham City Council by Summer 2018**
- **Launch Department of Innovation and Economic Opportunity by Spring 2018**
- **Launch Office of Social Justice and Racial Equity**
- **Launch OpenGov Transparency Portal**
- **Mandatory Customer Service Training for all City Employees by Spring 2018**
- **Publish and promote all available Boards and Agencies seats available for service by Summer 2018**

We encourage you to stay tuned for more announcements, plans and initiatives in the coming weeks and months.

In the meantime, please sign up for news and updates from the City of Birmingham at www.birminghamal.gov or contact our office at opi@birminghamal.gov or (205) 254-2000.

Sincerely,



Chanda Temple Public Information Officer, City of Birmingham
Office of Public Information

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our Transition Team effort has been driven by a handful of staff and key volunteers that served as connectors, recruiters, and advocates for issues that matter most to the citizens of Birmingham.

Thank you for your tremendous commitment to the City of Birmingham and for your support of The Woodfin Administration.

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